FALL 2021

Alumni Columns

Northwestern State University Magazine

Messages

Dr. Marcus Jones
1992
Interim President
Northwestern State University

Dear alumni,

After beginning the Fall 2021 semester on a positive note, welcoming students back to campus and seeing it transformed by their presence, parts of our state were destroyed by Hurricane Ida. The devastation affected many of our students, as well as faculty and staff with family members in southeast Louisiana. You will be pleased to know that our students wasted no time in organizing supply drives and coordinating with relief organizations to collect materials to assist with clean-up and other needs in the affected areas. The student-driven initiatives are just another example of how giving back is a real and active concept at Northwestern.

Now, we are looking forward to Homecoming and all of the associated celebrations that were postponed from last year. You can find information about Homecoming in the center of this magazine.

Serving as interim president at the university we love for the past several months has been enlightening in many ways. I have been able to talk with prospective students, non-traditional students and people from the community, listen to their needs and see things from many different perspectives. I will continue to do all that I can to advance the university while serving in this role and I thank you all for your support.

Dr. Drake Owens
2004, 2005
Assistant Vice President of External Affairs for University Advancement

My fellow alumni,

Reflecting on the last year and a half, I am grateful to be part of the Demon family and the support that our alumni and friends have shown during times of uncertainty. As we look forward to Homecoming, there is great anticipation at being able to come together again and greet friends in person.

One important lesson we've learned in recent times is that flexibility and a sense of humor go a long way in helping each other through stressful experiences. So many of our plans have pivoted on short notice or been reorganized due to factors beyond our control. I deeply appreciate the care and understanding you have shown regarding occasions that were postponed or modified. Our staff has been creative in finding ways to keep you connected to NSU and I applaud their hard work.

I encourage you to follow us on our social media channels and subscribe to *The Purple Pulse*, the e-newsletter for alumni. We want to be certain to communicate opportunities that are on the horizon. I look forward to seeing you soon.

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for University Advancement ..... Drake Owens, 2004, 2005

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Gail Jones ..... Natchez 1981, 1998

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE

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Editor ..... Leah Pilcher Jackson, 1994, 2011
Contributors ..... David West
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Matthew Vines, 2016
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University of Louisiana System sets timeline for presidential search

A new president for Northwestern State University could be named as soon as Nov. 8 with that individual taking office in January 2022.

The tentative timeline for the search and interview process was set forth during a Presidential Search Committee meeting Aug. 24 hosted by the Board of Supervisors for the University of Louisiana System. Dr. Jim Henderson, ULS president and search committee chair, said the aggressive timeline will not subtract from recruitment or vetting of candidates.

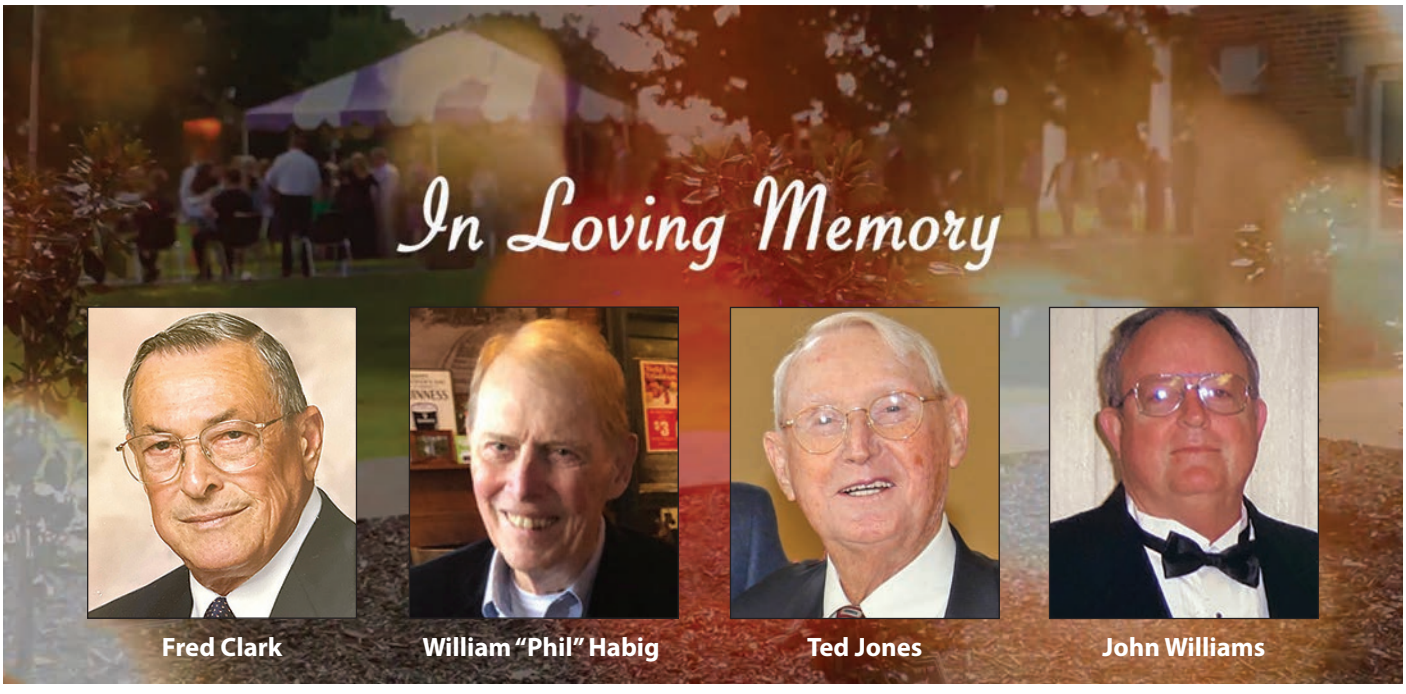
"The charge to the committee is to recommend at least two names to the board. The timeline is negotiable. Finding the exact candidate that will lead this university is not," Henderson said.

After advertising the position in multiple industry publications, applicants will be screened and selected for interview by Friday, Oct. 8. Once candidates have been identified, open interviews will be conducted on the NSU campus that will involve faculty, staff, community members and students. The interviews will be streamed online. Meanwhile, the committee will visit Northwestern State to gather public input and determine what qualifications are essential for NSU's next president.

The Search Committee is required to include public forums as part of the search process that allows public input.

Student, faculty and community input at the meeting indicated a desire to return to face-to-face classes, bridge the digital gap that affects many rural students, facilitate pathways for first-generation college students and explore ways in which the university can meaningfully impact social, intellectual and economic challenges in the Natchitoches community. Faculty also want their voices to be heard and valued.

The UL System will create digital portals on their website, https://www.ulsystem.edu/, in which constituents can provide input on the presidential search. Information regarding the search will be housed on the System's website at ulsystem.edu/nsusearch.



College of Business honors deceased faculty, plants memorial trees

Northwestern State University's College of Business and Technology hosted a remembrance ceremony Aug. 13 for four members of the faculty who passed away in the past year. Fred Clark (1931-2021), William "Phil" Habig (1945-2020), Dr. Ted Jones (1934-2019) and Dr. John G. Williams (1944-2020) were honored through personal tributes and the dedication of four trees outside Russell Hall.

NSU Interim President Dr. Marcus Jones said the occasion paid tribute "to colleagues who are no longer with us but whose vast contributions to Northwestern and the College of Business will positively impact the university for generations to come."

The four magnolia trees planted in memorial of Clark, Habig, Jones and Williams border the Barry Smiley Memorial Plaza, also named in honor of a former business dean and professor.

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Maj. Gen. Keith Waddell, adjutant general of the Louisiana National Guard, is promoted by his wife, Lisa, and John Bel Edwards, Governor of Louisiana, during a private ceremony held in the Governor's Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness on July 30, 2021, in Baton Rouge. Maj. Gen. Waddell was appointed to his current position as adjutant general in January 2020. *(Photo: Courtesy of the U.S. Air National Guard | Master Sgt. Toby Valadie)*

Louisiana National Guard adjutant general Waddell promoted to two-star general

Louisiana National Guard Adjutant General Keith Waddell (2020) was promoted to the rank of major general during a private ceremony in Baton Rouge July 30.

Waddell, who contributed 31 years to military service, was appointed by Louisiana Governor John Bel Edwards, who is the commander-in-chief of the LANG.

Waddell serves as the LANG's adjutant general, a role he assumed at the beginning of 2020, right before the COVID-19 pandemic took force. His first year in the position was wrought with unprecedented challenges as the state prepared to face seven named storms, a series of tornadoes, and adapted to the ever-changing response efforts for the pandemic.

Waddell is a native of New Roads who earned a bachelor's degree in physical education from LSU and received his commission through the school's ROTC program. He also holds a master's degree in strategic studies from the U.S. Army War College and a master's in homeland security from Northwestern State.

After graduating from LSU, Waddell served in the Army on active duty for four years before joining the LANG in 1995. When he left active duty, he became a certified teacher and began his career in education in Beauregard Parish. He taught, coached, and administered in Beauregard, Vernon, and Calcasieu Parishes prior to assuming the full-time role as adjutant general in 2020.

Maj. Gen. Waddell was named the Louisiana High School Coach of the Year in baseball in 2003 and basketball in 2005. He was also identified as the District Coach of the Year in multiple sports throughout his coaching vocation.

Waddell has served in numerous leadership positions and staff assignments at the company, battalion, and brigade levels. Of note, he commanded the 769th Engineer Battalion, the 139th Regional Support Group, and the 256th Infantry Brigade Combat Team.

Maj. Gen. Waddell and his wife, Lisa, live in Lake Charles. His greatest achievement is being the father of three children: Kimber (Wes), Michael (Lindsey), and Kenny (Jada) and grandfather of three: Braden, Karsyn, and Logan.

Order now for Christmas!
50th Anniversary
"In Good Taste"
2nd Edition of Cookbook
Purchase online at http://www.northwesternstatealumni.com/ingoodtaste/ at a cost of $25 with a $3 shipping and handling fee. Proceeds support scholarships for students.
In GOOD TASTE

Carmen Wallace Givens a rising star in her field

Carmen Wallace Givens, a Signal project engineer with Kansas City Southern, was recently featured and identified as a rising star by Progressive Railroading, a trade publication that focuses on rail and railroad topics.

Givens is a signal project engineer, responsible for managing and coordinating all phases of signal engineering and construction for capital, capacity and industry projects; participating in conceptual development and overseeing organization, scheduling and implementation tasks. Duties include project estimating, material management, construction management, database management and financial reporting. As part of departmental succession planning, she also serves as an inventory management trainee.

Givens

She earned an associate degree in electronics technology and a bachelor's degree in electronics engineering technology at NSU in 2010 and a master's in engineering management at Louisiana Tech University. Her first job after grad school was at CenturyLink where she was responsible for managing an outside plant material database. In 2014, she became a project engineer with KCS where she managed a state grade crossing surface project for four years. Then moved to her current position in 2018.

Givens is also a YouTube content creator. Her beauty and hair channel has over 22,000 subscribers and more than 2.8 million views.

Horton earns national Kappa Sigma fraternity honors

Dr. Steve Horton, alumnus adviser for Northwestern State University's Kappa Sigma Fraternity chapter (Theta Mu), was awarded Alumnus Advisor of the Year for the Northern Louisiana District and also was awarded the Outstanding Alumnus Adviser Award for the national fraternity, both as part of Kappa Sigma's 73rd Biennial Grand Conclave that was held in Nashville, Tennessee.

Horton, who has served the chapter as its advisor for over 25 years, is a 1984 initiate of the Theta Mu and served as its president (Grand Master) in 1987-1988. As president, he guided the chapter through losing the fraternity house to a fire and also during the period of constructing the new house on the Northwestern campus. While president, he was selected Mr. Northwestern State University by the student body. He graduated from NSU in May 1988, and from LSU in 1990 and 1998. Today he serves as executive director of the Louisiana School for Math, Science, and the Arts.

Kappa Sigma is the largest college social fraternity in the world with more than 200,000 living members, including over 17,000 undergraduates and more than 300 chapters and colonies throughout the United States in Canada. Founded in 1869 at the University of Virginia, Kappa Sigma's International Headquarters is based in Charlottesville, Virginia. Theta Mu was chartered at Northwestern State University in 1966, and today has over 1,100 initiated alumni members.

Dr. Steve Horton, center, was recognized as Alumnus Advisor of the Year for the Northern Louisiana District and the Outstanding Alumnus Adviser Award for the national Kappa Signa fraternity. He is pictured with Theta Mu Grand Master of Ceremonies (ritualist) Mason Deen and Grand Procurator (vice president) Loren Higginbotham.

Willis appointed to Dril-Quip board

Dril-Quip, Inc. appointed Darryl K. Willis (1991) to its Board of Directors upon the recommendation of its Nominating and Governance Committee. Willis, 52, has served as corporate vice president, Energy of Microsoft Corporation since 2019. From 2018 to 2019, Willis was vice president – Oil, Gas and Energy, Google Cloud at Google, Inc. From 1993-2017, he served in various technical, operational and management positions at BP internationally and in the United States, including as senior vice president of Reservoir Development and vice president – L48 Onshore Gas at BP America, General Manager of BP Angola, and Vice President – Technology Operations at BP-TNK in Moscow. Willis is also a director of Nine Energy Service, Inc., an NYSE-listed company that provides completion and production services primarily for North American unconventional oil and gas resource development, and the American Bureau of Shipping, a non-profit corporation that provides global classification and assessment services to the marine and offshore industries for vessel design and integrity.

Willis holds a Bachelor of Science degree from Northwestern State University, a Master of Science degree in geology from the University of New Orleans, and a Master of Science degree in management from the Stanford University Graduate School of Business.

Willis was inducted into NSU's alumni hall of distinction, the Long Purple Line, in 2018.

Willis

Dril-Quip is a leading manufacturer of highly engineered onshore and offshore drilling and production equipment that is particularly well suited for use in deep water, harsh environments and severe service applications. www.dril-quip.com

New director takes helm of Mosaic Templars Cultural Center

One day Quantia "Key" Fletcher found that years of study and work led her to the right career.

The Northwestern State University alumna was working for the National Park Service as a guide at the Cane River Creole National Historical Park near Natchitoches when her future became clearer. Her job included meeting with park visitors from around the world sharing Louisiana history.

"There would be mornings that I would walk the acres of land opening the historic structures for guests and imagine what it must have been like to live and work on that site both enslaved and free," said Fletcher. "The place engulfed me. The job spoke to me. I knew the work was important. It was at this site that I realized that I had found my place and passion in storytelling, history and preservation."

Fletcher earned a bachelor's in journalism at Northwestern State in 2004 and a master's in English with a concentration in folklife and southern culture in 2007. She was recently named director of the Mosaic Templars Cultural Center in Little Rock, Arkansas. She is responsible for setting the vision and long-range plans for the museum. Fletcher oversees the overall management and function of the museum. She develops and secures funding for the museum, develops a budget and represents the museum in a variety of settings.

Fletcher has worked for the Center for more than a decade including the past eight years as deputy director. The Center opened in 2008 as the first publicly funded museum of African-American history and culture in Arkansas. The Mosaic Templars Cultural Center derives its name from the Mosaic Templars of America, which was at its height one of the largest black fraternal societies in the United States.

The original building was destroyed by fire in 2005. The 35,000-square-foot interior is a state-of-the-art museum complex with exhibits, classroom, staff offices and an auditorium that seats 400 people. The façade of the new structure is a facsimile of the 1913 building. The museum's focus is to persevere, interpret and celebrate African American history in Arkansas. In April 2020, the MTCC became one of only three black history museums in the South to be accredited by the American Alliance of Museums and a distinction of which only one percent of museums nationally hold. This milestone MTCC has earned places the museum among some of the most prestigious museums in the country, like the Frederick Douglass House and the Smithsonian Institution's National Air & Space Museum.

"My hope is that museum becomes a main destination spot for people visiting Arkansas," said Fletcher. "We are a world class museum in one of the best cities in the country and we want more people to know about it. The work and experiences that we provide our patrons everyday open us up to continuing to connect and share our history."

"...my time at NSU equipped me with the foundation that I use daily to preserve, interpret, and celebrate Arkansas African American history and culture."

– Q. "Key" Fletcher

The entire museum gallery space is in the middle of a $3 million renovation that will result in a space where Fletcher said "audiences are engaged, Arkansas history and culture is explored, awareness of African American stories and achievements are increased, and visitors move from awareness to action ensuring that MTCC is established as an intergenerational institution." The first phase will open this fall. The museum is working to raise $1.3 million for the second phase of its renovation.

Fletcher said her time at Northwestern State was important in preparing her for the future.

"The amount of accessibility and support that I received from NSU is bar none," she said. "The school was small enough that I was able to thrive in the environment and build real relationships with my professors yet large enough to offer a wide array of curriculum and courses that really helped me grow as a student."

Fletcher

She credited being involved with campus clubs and organizations including Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority Inc. helped her sharpen leadership skills and serve the community of Natchitoches and fund raise which are key components of her current work.

Her graduate study took her several steps further.

"My graduate program was amazing. It allowed me to gain in depth knowledge of what heritage and community mean," said Fletcher. "I visited and volunteered with the Louisiana Folklife Center, attended conferences and learned about the amazing traditions of the Creole, Cajun and African cultures that exist in Louisiana. Being a New Orleans native, I had some knowledge but my time at NSU equipped me with the foundation that I use daily to preserve, interpret, and celebrate Arkansas African American history and culture.

"As I walk the halls of our exhibits each day, I am reminded that the work that I do all boils down to retracing steps and building the story of a community."

To learn more about the Mosaic Templars Cultural Center, go to arkansasheritage.com/mosaic-templars-cultural-center/mtcc-home.

Educator publishes children's book

Retired educator Leanne M. Jeane has published a children's book about a curious calf and his life on the farm. "Nate's Fate, A Curious Calf's Tale" is a story for all ages about "unexpected life events on the farm with his family."

Jeane, who lives in the Knight community, is a 1981 Merryville High School graduate and attended Northwestern State University where she earned a Bachelor of Science degree in General Agriculture in 1987. Later, she returned to NSU and earned certification in Special Education. Jeane taught at Evans High School for over 32+ years and retired at the end of this past school year.

She has worked in the beef cattle industry all of her life — first with her parents, later with her husband and son. The family lives on a farm and Nate is a calf she raised.

"Nate is not my first calf to raise on a bottle, and he certainly won't be my last, but he is definitely very special," Jeane said, adding that she would not let Nate be sold.

"It's a well-known fact that you don't keep bull calves on a farm, but I've been determined to keep Nate. My husband and son wanted to sell my 'baby bull' months ago, and that's when the idea for a book first came to my mind. Maybe if Nate earned his keep, he could live happily," Jeane said.

For more on the book, visit Jeane's Facebook page, "Leanne M. Jeane - Nate's Fate: A Curious Calf's Tale," - www.facebook.com/LMJeane/.

Dream realized with first novel

Northwestern State University alumna Emily Myers first recognized her love for reading and writing while in the seventh grade at Converse High School in Sabine Parish. She knew her dream of becoming a published author was lofty and came with an uncertain future. Still, she chose to continue her studies in English at NSU, graduating in 2016 with a Bachelor of Arts degree in English, Professional Writing, and a minor in Mass Communications.

Myers

Despite Myers' love and talent for writing, she found herself on a different path after college graduation. She put her dream on hold to pursue a stable career. Yet, as she began her career as a high school English teacher in Rapides Parish, her path toward certainty and stability was shattered when her father was diagnosed with Stage 3 lung cancer. He passed away after a year and a half battle with the disease.

Myers says losing her father was the catalyst that pushed her to focus on her dream now, rather than later.

Myers' debut novel, "The Truth About Unspeakable Things," is a Women's Fiction/Romance novel that follows a sexual assault survivor on her journey toward recovery. The emotional, and, at times uncomfortable aspects of the book are balanced with budding romance and unpredictable suspense. Her novel challenges standard genre norms and blends emotion, moral dilemmas, romance, suspense, family drama and action into one moving read.

Myers put her degree in English to good use while writing her debut novel.

"The Truth About Unspeakable Things" is available for purchase now on Amazon and through Barnes and Noble's website in both eBook and paperback forms. *To learn more about Myers, her book and her journey to publication, visit www.emilyamyers.com or find her on Facebook and Instagram @emilymyersauthor.*

Richardson named Kilgore College director of bands

Richardson

Dr. Kevin Gray Richardson (1997) has been named director of bands at Kilgore College and began duties Aug. 2, directing the Ranger Marching Band, wind symphony, jazz band and KC Steel.

Richardson has served as director of bands and assistant professor of music at The University of Texas Permian Basin since 2018. While at UTPB he directed the "Spirit of the Permian Basin" Falcon Marching Band and conducted the Symphonic Winds. He also taught courses in secondary music methods, instrumental conducting, marching band techniques and music theory.

Prior to UTPD, Richardson served as associate director of bands and assistant professor in the Hayes School of Music at Appalachian State University from 2012-18 where he was director of "North Carolina's Band of Distinction" – the 300-member Appalachian Marching Mountaineers – and conductor of the Appalachian Symphony Band. From 2005-11, Richardson held a similar position at NSU. Richardson taught middle and high school band in Texas for 10 years where his marching and concert ensembles consistently received superior ratings at University Interscholastic League events and band festivals across the country.

Richardson and his wife, Jenny, and their daughters, Sydney (14) and Luca (8) enjoy camping, grilling, watching college football and hanging out with their three dogs (Josie Brown, Brewtus and Pickles) and two cats (Maverick and Goose).

Spotlights

Danielle Vallotton (1997), a food animal veterinary technician at the LSU School of Veterinary Medicine, was presented the 2020 Bland O'Connor Support Person of the Year award by the Louisiana Veterinary Medical Association.

The award recognizes an individual who promotes animal health and welfare on the job, is of service to the profession and positively impacts their community. Vallotton joined the LSU vet school in 1998 and has helped train veterinarians and veterinary technicians, influencing the career paths of hundreds of veterinarians, students, technicians, interns and residents. Vallotton received her associate degree in veterinary technology from Northwestern State University.

Hammond Daily Star reporter **Raley Pellittieri** has won a first place award for Best Single Editorial in the Louisiana Press Association's Better Newspaper Competition.

Published on the 15th anniversary of Hurricane Katrina, Pellittieri's award-winning column told of her childhood experiences of having to evacuate with her family from the South Shore.

Pellittieri is pictured with General Manager Gary Miller.

She graduated summa cum laude from Ponchatoula High School in 2013 and earned a Bachelor of Arts degree from Northwestern State University in 2017. Before joining the *Daily Star* in October 2019, she worked as editor of the *Enterprise and Interstate Progress* newspaper in Mansfield and general assignments reporter for the *Natchitoches Times*. She also has experience as a substitute teacher with the Tangipahoa Parish School System.

Val Senegal (2008) joined the East Harris County Empowerment Council as director of Resource Development. As a former AmeriCorps member, public school teacher and political candidate, Senegal brings a wealth of knowledge and experience addressing the subject matters of public safety, affordable insurance, education, behavioral health and mental health within both the public and private sectors. Her extensive experiences as both a change agent and an employee-centric leadership professional will complement the initiatives of EHCEC. Senegal will lead EHCEC's fundraising and volunteer initiatives. Established in 2008, EHCEC is committed to improving the quality of life through innovative, sustainable programs and services that empower men, women, and youth to achieve their full potential. The group focuses exclusively on serving the eastern unincorporated communities of Channelview, Crosby, Galena Park, Jacinto City, North Shore and Sheldon, Texas. For more information about EHCEC visit www.ehcec.org, call 281-712-2550, or email info@eastharriscounty.org.

Senegal

Midlothian, Texas, ISD's Board of Trustees approved **Aaron Williams (2006)** as the executive director of leadership. Williams has 11 years of public education experience, beginning his career in Mabank, Texas, ISD. He has served as an assistant director of bands, advanced academics and fine arts coordinator, associate principal and director of advanced academics. He joined Midlothian ISD in 2020 as our coordinator of math, fine arts and accountability. He received his bachelor's degree from NSU, his master's degree in educational leadership from Stephen F. Austin University and his doctor of education from Johns Hopkins University.

Beadle

Shannon Beadle has been promoted to senior vice president and director of human resources at Texas Bank and Trust. Beadle has been employed in the bank's human resources division since October 2010. She is a graduate of the bank's 2012 Leadership Class, its 2017 Corporate University and is participating in the Independent Bankers Association of Texas' Bank Operations Institute. A Louisiana native, Beadle earned a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration from NSU and completed the Human Resource Management School through the Graduate School of Banking at the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

Safehaven, a program of the Jimmy Simpson Foundation dedicated to providing quality care for individuals with brain injuries, named **Becky Plemons, RN,** as program administrator, bringing her knowledge from over a decade in the medical field to the nonprofit organization. Plemons will work hands-on with Safehaven's skilled team and also its residents, overseeing resident supplies and equipment, working with case managers and supervising resident activities.

Plemons

Plemons, a 2006 graduate of NSU previously worked at Amedisys Home Health Care in Ringgold, where she has served as the Oasis and coding specialist/clinical manager since 2014.

continued on next page

Collins sworn as Natchitoches Police Chief

Collins

The Natchitoches City Council approved the appointment of Natchitoches Capt. Nikeo Collins (2001) as police chief. He was sworn in during a Sept. 1 ceremony.

Collins has served 27 years in the police department, starting as a reserve where he volunteered his time while also enrolled as a student at Northwestern State University. He started full time in 1996 as a patrolman, working his way through the department as he progressed. In 1998, Collins started in investigations and became a part of the Natchitoches Multi-Jurisdictional Drug Task Force.

"Capt. Collins is a very impressive individual," said Mayor Ronnie Williams Jr., who mentioned that Collins has been instrumental in getting over $1 million in grants to fund law enforcement efforts to continue serving the community.

Bailey joins athletic band staff at Western Carolina University

Bailey

Trevor Bailey (2011) was named assistant director of athletic bands at Western Carolina University where he is also assistant professor of music. Bailey brings a wealth of knowledge and experience to the Pride of the Mountains Marching Band.

He recently served as the director of bands at the University of Pikeville. While at UPike, he started the first marching band program in school history and helped cement the band program into the school's rich Appalachian culture. He also served as the advisor for the Black Student Union and Faculty in Residence during his tenure at UPike. Bailey was awarded the 2020 KMEA College Band Director of the Year for District 9.

Bailey recently completed his graduate teaching assistantship at the University of Alabama, assisting in the daily operations of the band program, supervising the 400 students of the Million Dollar Band and aiding in the planning and execution of the Crimson Cavalcade of Bands, Alabama Honor Bands and Summer Crimson Music Camps. In addition, he served as the conductor of the University Band and doctoral conducting associate for the Alabama Wind Ensemble. He will be completing his D.M.A. in Wind Conducting later this year.

Bailey earned a master's in music education degree from the University of Nevada-Reno where he served as a graduate teaching assistant with the band program.

Bailey received his bachelor's degree in music performance from Northwestern State where he studied under William E. Brent, Jeff Mathews and Masahito Kuroda. Throughout his time in Natchitoches, he was a member of the Wind Symphony, Wind Ensemble and served as the baritone section leader for the Spirit of Northwestern Marching Band.

Safety Management Systems, a division of Acadian Cos., has named **Stacey Armand (1999)** as sales and marketing writer. Acadian Cos. Safety Management Systems provides services to ensure that individuals working in the energy industry have a safe work environment and knowledge to perform duties safely.

Armand will plan and produce internal and external communications, assist in developing marketing materials and web content, write technical pieces, and support the executive group and operations with the development of communication pieces and presentations.

The North American Association of Wardens and Superintendents (NAAWS) posthumously named Louisiana Department of Public Safety and Corrections Warden **Wilmot "Sandy" McCain** its 2021 Warden of the Year. McCain's wife Diane, and sons Justin and Jeremy, received the award Aug. 31 at NAAWS Annual Summer Conference in Daytona Beach, Florida. McCain was selected from a nationwide field of wardens and recognized for his innovative works as the leader of Raymond Laborde Correctional Center (RLCC) in Central Louisiana. The NAAWS Warden of the Year award recognizes a warden who has gone the extra mile to solve problems in their organization, involved themselves in community and local organizations, and mentored in the development of others.

McCain served as warden of RLCC from July 11, 2016, until his retirement on March 31, 2020. He contracted COVID in early 2020 and died April 20, 2020. He was an Eagle Scout who graduated with a Bachelor of Arts degree from Northwestern State University in 1977. He worked in the private sector following graduation until 1996, when he accepted the position of Administrative Director at Work Training Facility North until promoted to Deputy Warden at J. Levy Dabadie Correctional Center in 2002. McCain was later promoted to Warden at J. Levy Dabadie Correctional Center until its closure in 2012. At that time, he accepted the role of Assistant Warden at RLCC, and in 2014 he was promoted to Warden at B. B. Rayburn Correctional Center in Angie, LA. He then returned to RLCC as Warden in 2016.

Breaux has important economic development position with Amazon

The boxes have the distinctive logo that millions recognize on sight. And Northwestern State University alumna Jessica Breaux plays a part in making sure orders from Amazon get to consumers quickly.

Breaux, a 2004 graduate in journalism with an emphasis in public relations, is a manager of economic development for Amazon.

She leads the company's investment projects throughout the south central United States. Breaux works closely with internal business partners to identify and develop new locations for Amazon fulfillment centers. Through this process, she partners with local policy makers and economic development organizations to address any challenges or impediments to development, facilitate the permitting and entitlements process and negotiate any potential economic development incentives.

"What I love most about my job is that every day is different," said Breaux, who joined the company in late 2019. "Every project is different and every community is different. I am always working multiple projects simultaneously and this requires me to pivot between various responsibilities regularly."

Since December, Amazon has announced three new fulfillment centers in Louisiana. One will be built in Carencro and should open this year. Centers in Shreveport and Baton Rouge are scheduled to open next year. The company said the centers will create more than 2,500 new, full-time jobs and more than $500 million in new capital investment.

"There's a little bit of mystery around economic development work," said Breaux." When I first engage with a community about the possibility for a new Amazon fulfillment center, everyone has signed confidentiality statements and we're operating under a project code name. It's really exciting to work behind the scenes for months (sometimes years) with a local team of passionate community leaders towards finalizing a project."

Breaux said the day of the announcement of a project is exciting for both Amazon and the community.

"You really can't beat the excitement that comes with announcing a new Amazon fulfillment center is locating in a community," said Breaux. "By the time you get to this point, so much hard work has happened and I always enjoy celebrating the accomplishments with our local partners."

Breaux worked at various levels of state and local government supporting economic development initiatives for several years. Just prior to joining Amazon, she worked for the Tennessee Valley Authority, the largest public power company in the United States. Breaux led a 14-person regional economic development team that managed job creation projects throughout TVA's seven state territory. She worked on successful site location projects with major corporations such as Nissan, LG Electronics, Facebook and Warner Music, among others.

Breaux called her time at Northwestern as "the perfect college experience.

According to Breaux, one of her major influences was Dr. Paula Furr, who served as head of the Departments of Journalism, Language and Communications and New Media, Journalism and Communication Arts.

"I've never told Dr. Furr this, but she made a significant impression on my professional and personal life," said Beaux. "She is an accomplished professional, but also a strong and independent woman. Dr. Furr was always honest, direct and shared her opinions with such poise they couldn't be ignored. By watching her, I learned how to speak my mind and that what I had to say was important. Learning from her gave me courage and confidence to push myself and believe I could accomplish my professional goals."

Hale

Artisan showcased as World Fair participant

NSU alum Jerry Hale (1979) was one of 150 artisans from around the globe chosen from over 1,000 applicants to participate in the world-renowned Selvedge World Fair, Aug. 31-Sept. 5. The five-day online event presented the work of 150 master artists from 78 countries bringing together varied, and in some cases endangered, textile traditions form around the world.

Hale, a resident of Breaux Bridge, was one of a small group of worldwide artisans chosen to participate in the Selvedge World Fair, which is based in London. Hale is president, CEO and The Southern Planter of Acadian brown cotton. Since 2010, he and his wife, Mary Alice Nicholson Hale, also an NSU graduate, have worked in the Bayou Teche region where his roots and his love for Acadian brown cotton are firmly planted in the soils bordering the Atchafalaya Basin. He is a fourth-generation cotton planter and prides himself being born and raised a grandson and great-grandson of sharecroppers in Rayville.

Although he enjoys hunting, fishing, traveling and gardening, Hale's most prominent interest is reviving the tradition of the Acadian brown cotton. For more information on Acadian brown cotton, contact Hale at AcadianBrownCottonofLouisiana@gmail.com

NORTHWESTERN STATE HOMECOMING 2021

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 21

6:00 p.m. **The Seven Oaks Stage Dedication and NPHC Centennial Showcase**
Iberville Green/Seven Oaks Stage

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 22

11:00 a.m. **Long Purple Line member reception**
Natchitoches Events Center

12:00 p.m. **Long Purple Line induction ceremony**

This year's inductees are state official Sujuan Boutte of Prairieville, businessman Harvey F. Marcus Sr. of Monroe, Louisiana State University Head Football Coach Ed Orgeron of Baton Rouge, NSU Vice President for External Affairs Jerry Pierce, Fed Ex executive John A. Smith of Memphis, Tennessee, and former NSU faculty member Thomas Whitehead of Natchitoches.

The inaugural recipients of the Distinguished Communications Professional Award, Ray Strother and the late Gen. Erbon and Marie Wise, will be recognized. This honor was recently created by the Department of New Media, Journalism and Communication Arts.

Inductees into the Hall of Distinguished Educators and College of Business Hall of Distinction will also be recognized.

Check-in for the lunch will begin at 11:30 a.m. Tickets are $25 and can be purchased at https://longpurpleline2021.eventbrite.com.

For more information, contact Danielle Cobb at cobbd@nsula.edu or call (318) 357-5513 to receive a refund.

*Northwestern State's **Greek Centennial Celebration**, which was scheduled to be held in conjunction with Homecoming, has been postponed to **April 8-9, 2022,** and will include **Flavor of Louisiana**, NSU's popular spring seafood extravaganza.*

Tickets that were purchased for the Greek Centennial will be honored on the April 8-9 dates. To request a refund, e-mail Cristy Bernard at bernardc@nsula.edu or call (318) 357-4292.

As of press time, all other Homecoming activities will take place as scheduled, but it is recommended that alumni check with organizers regarding specific events for possible changes.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 23

10:00 a.m. **N-Club Hall of Fame induction**
Magale Recital Hall

The N-Club Hall of Fame induction program for the Class of 2020 will take place beginning at 10 a.m. Saturday, Oct. 23 in Magale Recital Hall. Admission is free. The honorees are Terrence McGee, Stephanie Sowell, Tony Taylor, Robert Daniel, La'Terrica "Cooda" Dobin, Jordan Robison, Regina Roe, Linette Stuart, Randy Moore and Bob Kairis. Terry Alario Sr., Terry Alario Jr. will receive the N-Club's Distinguished Services Award. Coach Al Miller is the first recipient of the N-Club Pioneer Award.

11:00 a.m. **College of Business Hall of Distinction Induction Reception**
Natchitoches Room, Russell Hall

This year's honorees, Nicholas C. Courville, CPA; the late John G. Williams, and Dr. Jack and Barbara Russell, former faculty.

12:00 p.m. **Tailgate Festival**
Collins Pavilion & Tailgate Field

12:30-1:30 p.m. **Gallaspy College of Education and Human Development Hall of Distinguished Educators Program**
TEC auditorium

12:00-2:00 p.m. **Northwestern Demon Regiment OPEN HOUSE**
Noe Armory

3:00 p.m. **HOMECOMING FOOTBALL GAME**
Turpin Stadium

5:00 p.m. **Homecoming Court Presentation**

7:00 p.m. **Boogie on the Bricks**
Corner of Church and Front streets
Downtown Natchitoches

Dr. Chris and Jennifer Maggio Scholarship

The NSU Foundation Board surprised Dr. Chris Maggio by announcing the Dr. and Mrs. Chris Maggio Endowed Scholarship in celebration of his retirement. From left are Drake Owens, executive director of the NSU Foundation; Mike Knotts, Board fundraising co-chair; Director of Development Jill Bankston, Jennifer and Chris Maggio and Jo Pease, Board fundraising co-chair.

The fully endowed Dr. Chris and Jennifer Maggio Scholarship at Northwestern State University was established to honor Dr. and Mrs. Maggio and the Maggio family. The Maggio family has a long history tied to both Natchitoches and Northwestern. Since Maggio's grandfather immigrated to the United States from Italy in 1899, many members of the Maggio family have graduated from NSU.

Maggio's parents, Buddy and Nita, operated a popular business less than a mile from campus for more than 50 years.

Over the past year and a half, Maggio led Northwestern through one of the most difficult times in the university's 137-year history. With his wife Jennifer at his side, equally engaged in service to the university and city, the Maggios are well-known for their warmth and personal interaction with all who cross their paths. Chris and Jennifer immersed themselves not only in university life and their roles as president and first lady, but also as community leaders and friends.

The Maggio Scholarship at NSU is fully endowed at the $100,000 level.

To make a donation to the Maggio Scholarship and advance the future of Northwestern, visit northwesternstatealumni.com/maggio/.

Coach Matthew Brian Dodson Scholarship

A scholarship honoring the life of Coach Matthew Brian Dodson has been established through the Northwestern State University Foundation. Preference for the one-year scholarship will be given to students from southwest Louisiana, particularly those from Grand Lake High School, where Dodson spent most of his career. Preference will also be given to a senior member of the baseball team playing without an athletic scholarship and to a student battling cancer or who is a cancer survivor or the son or daughter of someone who has battled cancer. Preference will also be given to students majoring in education, those who are NSU cheerleaders and graduate students obtaining degrees in education leadership.

Dodson, 58, passed away April 25, 2020, at Ochsner LSU Health Center in Shreveport, after a long and extraordinary life.

Dodson, also known as "Coach," was a retired teacher and coach who spent 22 years teaching special education in Cameron Parish and 11 years teaching and coaching in Natchitoches Parish. He worked as a real estate agent for Cane Heritage Realty and was a university site supervisor for Northwestern State University. Dodson was a member of Word of Grace Ministries in Pineville. He was an honorary member of Theta Chi at Northwestern State and known as a local Natchitoches handy man.

Dodson

Dodson was a two-time cancer survivor that never wavered in his faith in Jesus Christ. After being diagnosed with cancer for a third time, his response to his two children that he adored was, "I'm not going out without a fight," and as always, he did just that.

Friends are invited to contribute to the Coach Dodson Memorial Scholarship by visiting http://www.northwesternstatealumni.com/coach-dodson-memorial-scholarship/.

Gorham

Gorham Minority Social Work Scholarship

A recent Northwestern State University graduate has created a scholarship intended to assist minority students pursuing a degree in social work. The Gorham Minority Social Work Scholarship will be presented to a sophomore, junior or senior level student majoring in social work with a 3.0 or better GPA.

Donor Terrell "TJ" Gorham Jr., LMSW, said he hopes the annual scholarship will inspire each recipient to give back and positively impact the community. Since graduating in 2016, Gorham has pursued the behavioral health and substance abuse side of social work and noticed a lack of resources for minorities in the field in the areas of academic support, access to quality field training and opportunities to learn what the field has to offer.

A native of Alexandria, Gorham was Mr. NSU 2016, was elected to the honor court and was a member of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc., Order of Omega, the National Panhellenic Caucus, Helping Hands and the African American Caucus. A Dean's List student, he also was involved with the Student Government Association and Student Activities Board.

To make a contribution to the scholarship, visit https://www.northwesternstatealumni.com/gorham-scholarship/. Information is also available by contacting the NSU Foundation office at (318) 357-5699.

Latief and Melba Ackel Scholarship

A fully endowed scholarship has been established to honor the memory of members of a prominent Natchitoches family who were alumni and long-time supporters of Northwestern State University. Members of the Ackel family gathered to make the presentation that will ensure the legacy of Latief and Melba Ackel as well as Philip and Pauline Ackel, through the support of student scholarships.

Latief Ackel and his wife Melba were married 52 years and parents of John and Philip Ackel, Rebecca Ackel Lavespere and Martha Ackel Murphy.

"This scholarship will help an NSU freshman majoring in business," Lavespere said. Geographic preference will be given to students from Louisiana. Recipients must have a 3.0 GPA or better.

Latief Ackel was a lifelong resident of Natchitoches and was a local businessman for over 50 years. He passed away Oct. 5, 1999.

Melba Masson Ackel was born in Cloutierville and graduated valedictorian of her class at Cloutierville High School in 1944. The couple married in May 1947. Melba worked alongside Latief in the family business and was a devoted Catholic. She passed away Feb. 18, 2020.

Philip and Pauline Soileau Ackel met at Northwestern State and were married for 34 years. Philip graduated from Northwestern State in 1983 with a degree in business. He was a member of Kappa Alpha Fraternity and the Natchitoches Jaycees. Philip joined his mother and father in the family business, Ackel Brothers Store until 1994. At the time of his death, he had been employed by the Louisiana Department of Agriculture for over 25 years.

Members of the Ackel family gathered to announce the Latief and Melba Ackel Scholarship, which also honors Philip and Pauline Ackel. The scholarship is endowed at the $10,000 level and will be awarded to a student majoring in business. From left are Abe Ackel, Ashli Ackel Plemmons, Martha Ackel Murphy, Rebecca Ackel Lavespere, and John Ackel.

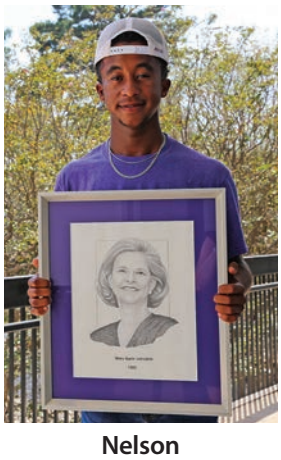
Pauline Soileau Ackel was born on August 6, 1960, in Opelousas. Pauline earned a Bachelor of Science in Nursing at Northwestern where she was a member of Tri Sigma Sorority and was selected as a member of the NSU Homecoming Court. She later attended Texas Wesleyan in Fort Worth, Texas, earning a master's degree in health science and a certificate of nurse anesthesia. Pauline served as a registered nurse for the Louisiana School for Math, Science and the Arts and for over 20 years she served as a Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetist at Rapides Regional Medical Center. She was a sustaining member of the Natchitoches Service League.

Philip and Pauline Ackel passed away Sept. 20, 2020.

The Latief and Melba Ackel Scholarship is endowed at the $10,000 level.

Mary Gunn Johnston Magnolia Endowed Scholarship

Chadwick J. Nelson of Natchez is the first recipient of the Mary Gunn Johnston Magnolia Endowed Scholarship established in July 2021 through the Northwestern State University Foundation as the university's first scholarship designed specifically to assist Black students attending NSU. The fund was established by the children of Mary Gunn Johnston in recognition of her education at Northwestern, her lifelong commitment to the Natchitoches community where she grew up and her belief in the importance of access to education for all.



Nelson

The four-year scholarship will be awarded to a Black undergraduate student who maintains a 2.5 grade point average or higher. Preference will be given to students from Natchitoches Parish or descendants of Natchitoches Parish residents, and to those who have participated in community service.

Johnston grew up in the Natchitoches area, and NSU played a large role in her family's life. Her mother, Sarah "Sally" Hertzog Gunn, worked at Northwestern for more than two decades, ultimately serving as the personal assistant to five NSU presidents. Mary Gunn graduated from St. Mary's Catholic School and began her college education at NSU where she studied Dietetics and was involved in numerous activities, including student government. She also landed her first post-college job working at Northwestern as a school dietician prior to marrying her husband, former U.S. Senator J. Bennett Johnston. She has always credited Northwestern with providing her the educational foundation and life lessons to be successful.

Johnston

Johnston is a member of NSU's Long Purple Line, the university's alumni hall of distinction. Throughout her life she has been active in a variety of civic and humanitarian efforts in Louisiana and Washington and projects to preserve Louisiana's culture and heritage.

Mary Gunn Johnston is the proud mother of four adult children and ten grandchildren. She currently lives with her husband in the Washington, D.C. suburbs.

Shawn and Linnye Daily Endowed Professorship in CAPA

A Natchitoches couple who are longtime supporters of Northwestern State University have created a professorship in the Dear School of Creative and Performing Arts. The donation of $80,000 will be matched by the Board of Regents Support Fund to present the fully endowed Shawn and Linnye Daily Endowed Professorship at the $100,000 level. Interest generated by the endowment will fund faculty research, travel, professional development, software, equipment and other necessities to enhance classroom instruction.

Mr. and Mrs. Daily have been devoted supporters of CAPA and other programs and development initiatives at NSU. Mrs. Daily served two terms as president of the Natchitoches-Northwestern Symphony Society, an organization in which the couple have been platinum underwriters for many years, and has served on the NNSS board of directors since its inception. Mr. Daily has also been an instructor of finance in NSU's School of Business for many years. Last year he returned a portion of dollars he earned as holder of the Charles Ragus Chair in Business by donating it back to the NSU Foundation to support the Shawn and Linnye Daily Endowed Scholarship, along with a portion to support the Columns Fund. He created the scholarship to benefit students pursuing degrees in business fields, such as accounting, finance or marketing. Mr. Daily also previously served as chapter advisor and financial advisor to NSU's Beta Omicron chapter of Pi Kappa Phi Fraternity.

From left are NSU Director of Development Jill Bankston, CAPA Director Scott Burrell, Shawn Daily, Dr. Greg Handel, provost and vice president for Academic Affairs, and Assistant Director of Donor Relations Cristy Bernard.

Mrs. Daily, a pianist, loves music and has hosted Symphony events in their home, her husband said.

The Daily Professorship is CAPA's sixth professorship and will rotate between faculty in Fine and Graphic Art, Music, New Media and Theatre and Dance.

Information on NSU's School of Creative and Performing Arts is available at https://capa.nsula.edu/.

Hyland and Sophie Packard Scholarship

Inspired by an important mentor and their love for Northwestern State University, a Natchitoches couple established a scholarship through the NSU Foundation that will give preference to a student from Anacoco High School majoring in early childhood education.

Hyland and Sophie Packard began creating the scholarship in 2019 prior to the COVID-19 pandemic in memory of Curtis Bradshaw, a former principal at Anacoco. Eligible recipients of the one-year scholarship are incoming freshmen with a 3.0 grade point average.

The Packard family is known in the Natchitoches community for service through ministry and volunteer efforts. Mr. Packard passed away Feb. 5 at the age of 92.

Mrs. Packard said Bradshaw, a childhood friend of her father, was her principal from the time she began school at age five until she graduated as salutatorian of her class at Anacoco. He was later superintendent of schools in Vernon Parish.

Bradshaw earned a 2-year teaching certificate at Louisiana State Normal, as NSU was then known, in 1936. His wife was Mrs. Packard's home economics teacher. She said Bradshaw encouraged many other students to attend Northwestern and helped her obtain a student job in the library with the late Eugene P. Watson, the longtime campus librarian for whom NSU's current library is named.

Hyland Packard graduated from Melville High School and enrolled at NSU in 1946. He was a U.S. Naval officer and chaplain, who served during the Korean Conflict. The couple married in 1955. Mr. Packard began teaching chemistry and physics at Fair Park High School in Shreveport and commuted to NSU on Saturdays for four years to earn his master's degree. After his retirement in 1986 he attended New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary and was ordained as a minister at Anthony Baptist Church, which he pastored for over 10 years.

Hyland and Sophie Packard

Sophie Packard completed her degree in reading and early childhood education at Northwestern in 1962 and worked with Mary Lee Posey and Marie Shaw Dunn in what is now NSU's Child Development Center during the era in which kindergartens were being developed for the parish schools. She taught kindergarten and first grade for many years and attended the Gesell Institute of Child Development in New Haven, Connecticut, to become a certified evaluator of children.

Community service was a lifestyle for the Packards. The scholarship for an Anacoco student is not necessarily meant for the school's top student. The Packards were also motivated to create the scholarship because of their family's love for NSU.

Doris Carroll and Thomas Lawrence (T.L.) Miller Scholarship

A new scholarship has been established through the Northwestern State University Foundation to benefit students majoring in elementary education. The Doris Carroll and Thomas Lawrence (T.L.) Miller Scholarship will be awarded to a student with at least a 3.0 grade point average with a demonstrated financial need.

Virginia M. Atwood, Ph.D., of Nicholasville, Kentucky, established the scholarship in memory of her parents, who were longtime residents of Natchitoches and supporters of NSU.

T.L. Miller was a civic leader and businessman, a member of the Pecan Growers Association, board member of People's Bank and Trust in Natchitoches, a 33rd degree Mason, and Shriner in Natchitoches. He was chairman of the Welfare Board for 22 years and was named the Chamber of Commerce Man of the Year in 1975.

According to his grandson, Michael Adkins, T.L. Miller spent many years on his farm with his cattle and pecan operations, which is now Miller Farm Road subdivision, an area that was used in the filming of the movie "The Horse Soldiers." He worked with Dr. Arthur Allen, a professor of biological sciences at NSU, to develop the Miller Pecan through a grafting process.

Doris Miller enjoyed donating her time to First United Methodist Church as church secretary and through work with the Mudder's Club.

Both T.L. and Doris gave back to their community, selling raffle tickets for everything, even after their children graduated from Natchitoches High School.

Atwood and her sister, the late Linda Miller Adkins, both earned bachelor's and master's degrees in elementary education at NSU and several grandchildren and great-grandchildren are also NSU graduates. Linda Adkins, who passed away in 2017, had a 32-year teaching career in the Natchitoches area.

Announcing the establishment of the Doris Carroll and Thomas Lawrence (T.L.) Miller Scholarship at NSU are, from left, Melinda Adkins Young, Dr. Virginia Miller Atwood and Michael Adkins.

"An ideal scholarship recipient would have successfully completed a fair amount of college level coursework, show a firm commitment to elementary education and have been admitted to the elementary teacher education program," said Atwood, who taught in elementary schools for eight years. She holds a Ph.D. in curriculum and instruction from the University of Texas and retired from the Department of Curriculum and Instruction at the University of Kentucky.

For more information or to contribute to the scholarship, visit northwesternstatealumni.com.

Robert W. Neuman Scholarship and Program Enhancement

Dr. Kathleen Byrd established a scholarship in memory of her late husband, the archaeologist Robert W. Neuman, through the Northwestern State University Foundation that will benefit a student majoring in anthropology, sociology or history. In addition, Byrd established the Robert W. Neuman Program Enhancement to support the preservation of documents and organization of cultural material related to the Melrose Collection and the Association for the Preservation of Historic Natchitoches.

The scholarship will be awarded to a sophomore, junior or senior level student. Sophomores must maintain a 2.5 or better grade point average. Juniors and seniors must maintain a 3.0 or better grade point average. Preference will be given to students engaged in an internship related to anthropology, sociology or history.

Byrd said the ideal recipient would be a student interested in a career in anthropology, sociology or history but needs extra financial help. The internship could be at the Cane River National Heritage Area, Melrose Plantation, state or national parks, or local organizations such as the Ben Johnson Education Center.

Neuman

The Robert W. Neuman Program Enhancement will be administered by the head archivist in the Cammie G. Henry Research Center which is housed in NSU's Eugene P. Watson Memorial Library. Byrd said she and her husband spent many hours doing research in the archives.

Byrd serves on the board of the Association for the Preservation of Historic Natchitoches, which owns and maintains Melrose Plantation. She hopes the program enhancement will support the archives and the Cammie G. Henry Collection housed there. Byrd consulted NSU's Head Archivist Mary Linn Wernet about ways to increase accessibility to the Melrose collection, a large and unique assortment of Louisiana documents, rare books and other items of historic and cultural interest, that is the core of the Cammie G. Henry Research Center's holdings.

Neuman was committed to sharing his love for archaeology with the public and always had time to talk with those interested in learning about Louisiana's past.

When Byrd accepted a position at NSU in 1994, Neuman retired from LSU and the couple moved to Natchitoches where they raised Appaloosa horses and traveled. Even in retirement, Neuman published presented papers at meetings. After suffering from a series of medical problems, he passed away of a drug-resistant strain of pneumonia on September 9, 2019, at age 88.

Friends who wish to make a contribution to the Robert Neuman Scholarship or Program Enhancement can do so by visiting www.nortwesternstatealumni.com.

NSU secures $500K Sports Performance Center donation from NRMC

The Northwestern State Athletic Department took another pivotal step toward making its Sports Performance Center a reality.

Natchitoches Regional Medical Center, the official health care partner for NSU Athletics, further strengthened its commitment to Demon athletics by pledging $500,000 toward the undertaking that will usher in a new era of NSU athletic performance. NRMC Chief Executive Officer Kirk Soileau announced the commitment at a luncheon hosted for NSU coaches and administrators in the Listach Conference Room at Natchitoches Regional Medical Center.

The half-million dollar donation from NRMC pushes the total of privately funded donations for the project to nearly $1 million with other private gifts and funding sources anticipated to be secured in the next several months.

"It is exciting to see momentum for this transformational project continue to grow."
– Greg Burke, A.D.

The announcement of the gift comes nearly six years to the day after Natchitoches Regional Medical Center entered into an agreement to become the official health care provider for NSU Athletics. Since then, the two parties have extended the initial four-year agreement with NRMC re-confirming its commitment with Monday's presentation.

NSU Vice President for External Affairs Jerry Pierce, NSU Interim President Dr. Marcus Jones, NRMC Chief Executive Officer Kirk Soileau, NSU Director of Athletics Greg Burke, NRMC Board of Commissioners Chairman Ronald Corkern and NRMC Board of Commissioners member Mike Newton pose with the artist's rendering of the NSU Sports Performance Center.

NSU Director of Athletics Greg Burke expressed gratitude to NRMC on behalf of the athletic department's coaches, staff and student-athletes.

The sprawling strength and conditioning facility, which will be constructed on the back end of the Athletic Fieldhouse, will include a new 11,600 square foot weight room with space for more than 100 student-athletes, a 25-foot artificial turf pad, a new nutrition center, student-athlete lounge area and offices for the strength staff.

The second phase of the project will convert the current weight room into a high-tech rehabilitation center along with other sports medicine upgrades.

The third phase will be the renovation of the current "Eugene Christmas Training Room."

"It is exciting to see momentum for this transformational project continue to grow," Burke said. "Having a strength and conditioning center that will be the best among Southland Conference members, past and present, will be a game changer on the recruiting front and in the everyday lives of our student-athletes and coaches."

Contributions can be made directly to the Sports Performance Center project by visiting https://app.mobilecause.com/vf/Victorious or by contacting Burke at 318-357-5251 or burkeg@nsula.edu.

Ireland, Dowden among honorees at LSHOF induction ceremonies

Doug Ireland (1986) and Villis "Bo" Dowden (1965) were among those honoring during the 2021 Louisiana Sports Hall of Fame induction ceremonies Aug. 28. Ireland, former NSU Sports Information Director and longtime Louisiana Sports Hall of Fame chairman, was one of three journalists selected for the 2021 Distinguished Service Award in Sports Journalism from the Louisiana Sports Writers Association. Dowden, a Natchitoches native, who was chosen as one of the 35 greatest pro anglers of all-time, was celebrated as 1980 Bassmaster Classic champion.

From left are this year's honorees Rickie Weeks, Sheldon Mickles, Terry McAulay, Pat Henry, Ireland, Dowden, Glenn Dorsey, Ro Brown and Courtney Blades Rogers.

Bean establishes endowment fund

Terrance Bean reached new heights as a student and an athlete at Northwestern State in the 1990s, and now he wants to help future Demons accomplish the same.

Through the "Perpetually Purple" endowed giving program, Bean has established the Bean Family Endowment.

The Bean clan embodies the family atmosphere at NSU as his daughter Aiyana played volleyball for the Lady Demons (2017-18) and is a recent graduate in industrial engineering technology.

The N-Club Hall of Famer is a fixture at NSU alumni events and reunions, a member of the N-Club Committee and an annual volunteer at the NSU Leon Johnson Invitational track meet.

The Bean family's seed donation for the scholarship is being matched by T-Mobile. Other donations are being accepted to establish the minimum contribution level of $10,000 for the endowment fund.

Donations can be made via text message by texting "NSUBEAN" to 41444.

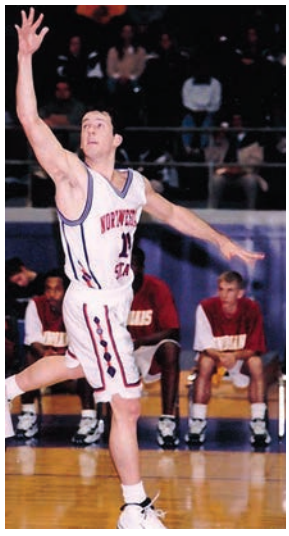
Terrance Bean, a former NSU All-American high jumper, is pictured with his family.

Bundy Scholarship endowed

Ryan Bundy left Northwestern State as its all-time men's basketball leader in assists. After Bundy's death in October 2014, his family made sure his legacy would continue with the establishment of the Ryan Bundy Basketball Scholarship. Their latest gift ensures that grant-in-aid joins the ranks of Northwestern State's permanently endowed athletic scholarships, reaching the requisite $10,000 in donations with a sizeable contribution from Bundy's parents, Melody and Keith Bundy.

During his four-year playing career from 1994-98, Bundy amassed 552 assists, averaging 5.4 per game across his 102 career contests. His career assist mark stood until the 2014-15 season when Jalan West surpassed him.

To view a complete list of athletic endowments, visit www.nsudemons.com/endowments.



Bundy

Scholarship honors educator's legacy

Dr. Murphy Rogers' ties to Northwestern State predate the school's designation as a university. Thanks to his family, his legacy – more than a century in the making – will continue unabated into a second 100 years.

The "Grand Cane, Louisiana, Rogers Scholarship" received its initial donation, putting it on track to join the nearly 70 endowed athletic scholarships at NSU.

The Rogers scholarship will be awarded to a student-athlete who also is a nursing major, such as softball outfielder Hayley Barbazon, who completed her nursing degree in May 2020 and worked as a nurse while playing her final season with the Lady Demons in 2021.

Rogers' family wanted to establish the scholarship in honor of a man who built an N-Club Hall of Fame and Long Purple Line legacy in Natchitoches and just as indelible a mark in Grand Cane, a village located approximately 56 miles northwest of Natchitoches in DeSoto Parish.

Upon his enshrinement in NSU's Long Purple Line, which honors distinguished alumni in all walks of life, Rogers was described as a pioneer of modern education. He served as Louisiana's supervisor of elementary schools and later was the director of college curricula for the State Department of Education.

As a dean at Northwestern State, Rogers donated more than $120,000 worth of scholarships at his alma mater.

Oliphant Scholarship continues to grow

The James Oliphant Memorial Golf Tournament is a little more than a decade old and thanks to the generosity of its latest group of golfers, it helped its namesake scholarship reach a new donation level.

More than 70 golfers gathered at Northwestern Hills Golf Course in May for the 12th annual Oliphant tournament, raising $5,000 for the endowed football scholarship named for Oliphant, the father of Demons Unlimited Foundation Board member and Northwestern State alumna Nicole Gray.

A Northwestern State alumnus, Oliphant was a beloved basketball, track and field and football coach in Natchitoches Parish. He retired because of health complications from ALS before his death Oct. 19, 1988.

Deputy Athletic Director Dr. Haley Taitano, Nicole Gray and Director of Athletics Greg Burke celebrated a donation to the James L. Oliphant Scholarship.

Twenty years later, Gray honored her father's legacy by establishing the James L. Oliphant Scholarship, which is one of 25 endowed NSU athletic scholarships of at least $20,000. The Oliphant golf tournament followed with Gray building the event with help from her uncle, Odell Oliphant, and cousin, J.D. Oliphant.

The Demons Unlimited Foundation is a 501(c)(3) non-profit entity supporting NSU Athletics through scholarship funding for all 14 sports, facility enhancement, student-athlete recruiting efforts and coach retention performance bonuses among other methods.

In Memory

1945 – Martha Rose Lunday Nornberg, May 19, 2021, Little Falls, Minnesota

1948 – Dorothy McGraw Benoy, May 26, 2021, Nacogdoches, Texas

1948 – Pauline Lee Shaw, May 25, 2021, Many

1949 – Iona Lane-Burslem, Aug. 3, 2021, Natchitoches

1950, 1957 – Fred Lem Yarbrough Clark, June 16, 2021, Coushatta

1951 – Billy Scroggins, July 30, 2021, Houston

1952 – Nona Nelms Bobo, June 9, 2021, Natchitoches

1952 – Marinel Cowgill Derouen, Aug. 7, 2021, Johnson City, Tennessee

1956 – Margie D. Cruse, June 10, 2021, Jena

1956 – Ruth Beatrice Herron, May 4, 2021, Sun City, Arizona

1956 – Sybil Alyne Farmer Leachman, Aug. 11, 2021, Ruston

1957 – Joe Malcolm Crouch, July 13, 2021, Fort Worth, Texas

1959 – Patsy "Pat" Routh Bradford Bates, May 20, 2021, Olla

1959 – Troy Thomas Kelly, June 5, 2021, Dodson

1960 – Charles Raymond Whitehead Jr., Sept. 15, 2021, Natchitoches

1961 – Ronald Rene "Ronnie" Arceneaux, Sept. 13, 2021, Lafayette

1961 – J. Kenneth Busby, July 25, 2021, Florien

1961 – Charles Wilson Hughes, June 1, 2021, Magnolia, Arkansas

1962 – Mary Manitzas Georgiafandis, July 18, 2021, Shreveport

1963 – Charles Edward Bundrick, Jan. 4, 2021

1963 – Gracie Godwin LeBlanc, June 30, 2021, Abbeville

1963 – Arnetta McPhearson Hyams, Sept. 23, 2020, Natchitoches

1964 – James Blue Manning, April 30, 2021, Wylie, Texas

1966 – Patricia Burford Churchman, July 21, 2021, Natchitoches

1966 – Glennie Grace Dowden Scarborough, July 17, 2021, Cane River

1966 – Tommy Brooks Powell, July 21, 2021, Shreveport

1967 – Robert William Howell, Aug. 30, 2021, Winnfield

1969 – Betty Jo Walker Oxley, Sept. 13, 2021, Negreet

1969 – Vettye Branton Garrett, Feb. 22, 2021, Monroe

1970 – Diane Dollar Harris, Aug. 1, 2021, Monroe

1971 – Anne J. Finley, July 31, 2021, Hot Springs, Arkansas

1971, 1981 – Mary Eve Baskerville, Aug. 26, 2021, Shreveport

1974 – Stanley Albert Gove, Sept. 8, 2021, Elkhart, Texas

1975 – James Wesley Quillin, May 26, 2021, Pineville

1980, 1982 – Martha Kay Whitehead, June 16, 2021, Natchitoches

1982 – Rev. Donnell C. Spurgeon, April 24, 2021, Georgetown

1983 – Roger Lane Reynolds Sr., Sept. 8. 2021, Mamou

1986 – Deborah Joy McBride, July 29, 2021, Shreveport

1986 – Paul Leslie "Ed" Edwards, July 5, 2021, Alexandria

2013 – Charles DeWayne LaCaze, May 25, 2021, Natchitoches

2018 – Jennifer Kay Grigsby, July 17, 2021, Coushatta

Katherine Cilano Dalla Tezza, May, 16, 2021, Ocoee, Florida

Bert Thomas Batchelor, May 15, 2021, Tallulah

Mildred Lauw Moore, June 20, 2021, Natchitoches

Betty LaCour Matthews, July 10, 2021

Alan H. Crosby, former professor and head of the Department of Chemistry – Aug. 1, 2021, Williamsport, Pennsylvania

Lori Ann O'Bannon Savell, Aug. 24, 2021, Bellwood

Dr. Ray Wallace, former faculty, Aug. 26, 2021, New Albany, Indiana

Bobby Joe Poisso, Sept. 7, 2021, Winnfield

Artist honors late wife with soaring sculpture

Natchitoches artist James Borders unveiled a sculpture that honors the memory of his late wife, Lisa, who lost her battle with breast cancer in 2018 at age 49. The soaring metal monument, "Faith," stands about 40 feet tall at Trinity Baptist Church in Natchitoches and was two years in the making. The sculpture also honors Avis Borders Fletcher, James' mother, and Margaret Pauline Chesser, Lisa's mother. Both passed in 2020.

In 2019, Borders, a former professor of art at NSU, orchestrated the creation of the Lisa Chesser Borders Permanent Student Art Collection, housed in NSU's Academic Success Center in Watson Library, and the Lisa Chesser Borders Endowed Meraki Scholarship, created through the NSU Foundation. Student work on display in the Borders collection at Watson Library is for sale to donors for $300 for each piece. Upon purchase, $250 will go to the student artist while $50 support the scholarship. Acknowledgement of each donor will be placed along with the piece in the permanent collection.

Friends can also contribute to the NSU scholarship by visiting https://www.northwesternstatealumni.com/lisa-borders/.

Guess Who

Four Demon Dazzlers huddled together during a football game, as pictured in the 1991 Potpourri. ***Can you name them?***

Email your answer along with your name, city of residence and year of graduation to jacksonl@nsula.edu.

Pictured in the Summer 2021 edition of *Guess Who* were Paxton Girtmon, Winnfred Williams and Reggie Watson gathered at an Alpha Phi Alpha interest party in Fall 1991.

Those who guessed correctly were:
Laura "Mini" Jeanice Epps (1991), Jasper Alabama
Kinika C. Lloyd Reece (1996, 1998), Austin, Texas
Anquinette Moore (1992), Many
Dr. Leonard Williams (1993) New Orleans
Leonard writes, "They are my fraternity brothers and I think I probably shot that photo for The Potpourri when Scott Jolly was editor."
Douglas Hannah (1993), Logansport
Sandra Garner-Coleman (1976), Vernon Hill, Virginia

Knotts' donation kicks off renovation of former Wesley building

Two brothers who are alumni and longtime supporters of Northwestern State University helped kickstart a renovation project that will provide new offices for NSU's Office of Development and staff.

Mike Knotts of Haughton and Kenny Knotts of Benton donated $30,000 to the NSU Foundation that will contribute to upgrading a building at 520 University Parkway, which for many years housed the Wesley Foundation, a Methodist campus ministry. The Development staff moved out of the Alumni Center two years ago and have been working from separate offices in Russell Hall while Alumni staff continues to work from the Alumni Center.

Mike Knotts, a 1986 graduate, served as NSU Foundation board member and is currently its fundraising committee chair. For many years, he hosted NSU's Bossier Parish recruiting receptions for incoming students and their parents. He is a member of the NSU Columns Fund and a contributor to the Mack & Jonell Knotts Annual Scholarship and other special projects for the NSU Foundation. His son, Nick, is a current NSU student.

Kenny Knotts is a 1989 NSU graduate and former Demon baseball player. He is currently serving as past president of the Demons Unlimited Foundation Board of Directors and a member of the Executive Committee.

Friends who wish to contribute to the renovation fund can do so by visiting www.northwesternstatealumni.com.

From left are Kenny Knotts, Director of Development Jill Bankston, CFRE; Bridgette Knotts and Mike Knotts.

ENVELOPE

The Columns Funds - Annual Giving

The Northwestern State University Foundation is committed to excellence in providing educational and cultural resources, and fostering economic development in our region.

Contributors to the Columns Fund provide funding for many programs and projects with their annual unrestricted, tax-deductible contributions. During times of budget cuts and economic challenges, the Columns Fund is even more crucial to the continued success of Northwestern State. By contributing to the Columns Fund, using the envelope provided in this magazine, you have the opportunity to make a significant impact on Northwestern State's future and make a meaningful investment in our student's success.

You can use the enclosed envelope or go to **nsula.edu/columnsfund/** to donate today.

Where Your Money Goes
2020-2021

Northwestern State University
Alumni Columns
Natchitoches, LA 71497-0002

CLASS OF 2025

Northwestern State University welcomed the Class of 2025 during New Student Convocation, an event that marks the beginning of the students' academic journey, which ends at commencement. During convocation, students are introduced to deans and department heads, hear from motivational speakers and learn about Demon traditions.